

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION) OF NORTHWESTERN CORPORATION) DBA NORTHWESTERN ENERGY FOR) AUTHORITY TO INCREASE ITS) ELECTRIC RATES)	ORDER AMENDING SCHEDULING ORDER EL14-106
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On December 19, 2014, the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received an Application for Authority to Increase Rates for Electric Service in South Dakota (Application) filed by NorthWestern Corporation dba NorthWestern Energy (NorthWestern) for approval to increase rates for electric service customers in its South Dakota service territory by approximately \$26.5 million annually or approximately 20.24% based on NorthWestern's test year ending September 30, 2014. NorthWestern states a typical residential electric customer using 750 kWh per month would see an increase of \$16.76 per month. The proposed changes may potentially affect approximately 62,100 customers in NorthWestern's South Dakota service territory. NorthWestern proposed an effective date of March 1, 2015.

On December 24, 2014, the Commission electronically transmitted notice of the Application and the intervention deadline of February 6, 2015, to interested individuals and entities on the Commission's PUC Weekly Filings listserv. On February 6, 2015, Toshiba America Business Solutions, Inc., Trail King industries, Inc., and Redfield Energy, LLC (collectively, the Industrial Intervenors) and Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (Wal-Mart) filed Petitions to Intervene. On January 8, 2015, the Commission issued an Order Assessing a Filing Fee and Suspending the Operation of Proposed Rates. On March 3, 2015, the Commission granted intervention to Industrial Intervenors and Wal-Mart.

On March 20, 2015, the Commission received a petition from twenty-seven (27) NorthWestern customers requesting to suspend the proposed rate increase requested by NorthWestern and to hold a public hearing to determine if such a rate should be allowed or decreased. The Commission voted unanimously to hold a public hearing in Yankton, South Dakota. On May 14, 2015, the public hearing was held as ordered.

On June 26, 2015, the Commission issued a scheduling order that the parties had agreed on as follows:

Staff and Intervenors' testimony filed and served	September 14, 2015
All parties' rebuttal testimony filed and served	October 5, 2015
All parties' exhibit lists and witness lists filed and served	October 12, 2015
Evidentiary hearing	October 27-30, 2015

On September 2, 2015, NorthWestern filed a letter proposing to suspend the above-referenced procedural schedule to allow NorthWestern and the Intervenors an opportunity to continue settlement discussions. Per NorthWestern's letter, Commission Staff concurs in the

suspension. On September 9, 2015, Industrial Intervenors and Wal-Mart each filed a Consent to Change in Procedural Schedule. The proposed schedule is as follows:

Staff and Intervenors' testimony filed and served	September 28, 2015
All parties' rebuttal testimony filed and served	October 19, 2015
All parties' exhibit lists and witness lists filed and served	October 23, 2015
Evidentiary hearing	October 27-30, 2015

It is therefore

ORDERED, that the parties shall follow the procedural schedule as set forth above except as otherwise ordered by the Commission.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 10th day of September, 2015.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE
The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, electronically or by mail.
By: <u>Karen E. Bremer</u>
Date: <u>9-10-2015</u>
(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Chris Nelson

CHRIS NELSON, Chairman

Kristie Fiegen

KRISTIE FIEGEN, Commissioner

Gary Hanson

GARY HANSON, Commissioner